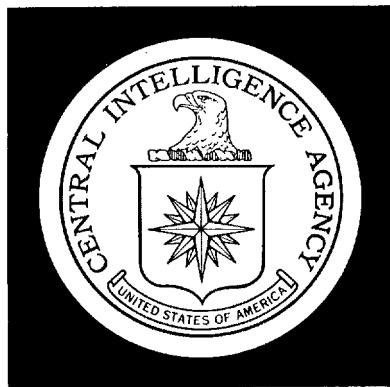


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51

19 November 1969

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CONTENTS

USSR-Egypt: The Soviet ambassador in Cairo has expressed irritation over recent Egyptian statements.
(Page 1)

Nigeria: Federal forces have attacked in several sectors. (Page 3)

India: Violence, strikes, and political turmoil are increasing in West Bengal. (Page 4)

Pakistan: A leading East Pakistani politician is abandoning his policy of restraint. (Page 5)

Chile: Military unrest has continued to build since the army uprising last month. (Page 6)

Bolivia: The armed forces commander has outlined his views on the Latin American military. (Page 7)

Cuba-Mexico: A new passenger air route between Cuba and Latin America may soon be available. (Page 9)

Surinam: The composition of the new coalition government augurs well for stability. (Page 10)

Zambia: Soviet aid (Page 11)

East Germany - Sudan: Credit extension (Page 11)

UN-Indonesia: West Irian (Page 12)

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Approved For Release 2003/10/01 : CIA RDP79T00975A015000030002-0

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Approved For Release 2003/10/01 : CIA-RDP79T00975A015000030002-0

USSR-Egypt: The Soviet ambassador in Cairo has expressed his irritation over several recent Egyptian statements on the Middle East.

According to US officials in Cairo, Ambassador Vinogradov told another diplomat that when he delivered the latest US proposal for a Middle East settlement to the Egyptians, he asked only that it be studied with care and then discussed with Soviet representatives. Vinogradov vehemently denied that he had called the US proposal an American concoction biased in favor of Israel, words he said had been put in his mouth by Al Ahram editor Heykal.

The ambassador added that the forthcoming visit to Moscow by an Egyptian delegation was purely Cairo's initiative, and he voiced resentment at the UAR's premature announcement of the visit. He said that as of 15 November he had received from Moscow neither agreement to the visit nor any suggestion of an appropriate date. Vinogradov also expressed contempt for recent articles in the Egyptian press claiming that Israeli forces had participated in US and British naval exercises, and he denied that the USSR had anything to do with these charges.

Vinogradov's irritation was probably due, for the most part, to what he believed was Cairo's poor sense of timing. His pique, though no doubt genuine, certainly does not indicate any worsening of Soviet-Egyptian relations. Nevertheless, his comments--which may have been intended to reach the US--suggest that the Arabs, and especially Cairo, continue to be troublesome associates who create many problems for Moscow in its attempts to negotiate in their name.

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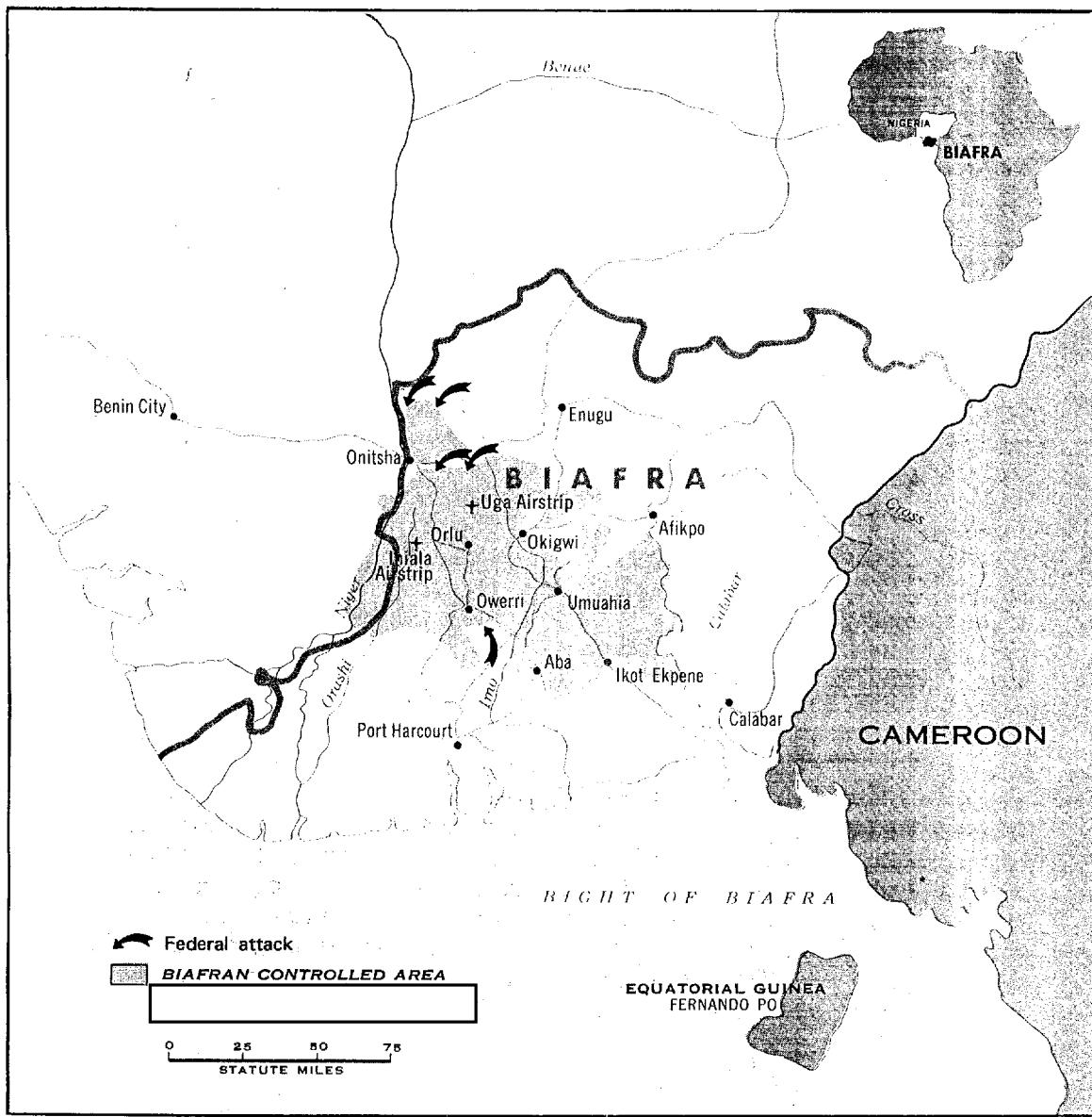
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Nigerian Federal Forces on the Attack



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Nigeria: Federal forces have attacked Biafran positions in several sectors.

The Biafrans initially lost some ground at one point on the northern front, but have since pushed back the federal forces. On the southern front, a see-saw battle is taking place southeast of Owerri, where the Nigerians may make some minor gains.

This intensified fighting may represent the initial stages of the federal offensive, forecast for some time, that is designed to break the stalemate that has prevailed since last April. Federal army units have recently received troop reinforcements and are well supplied with munitions. They can probably keep pressure on the Biafrans for some time. Secessionist field commanders are again reporting severe ammunition shortages. At present, however, the Nigerians do not seem to be on the verge of any dramatic gains. [redacted]

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India: [Violence, strikes, and political turmoil are increasing in West Bengal, and New Delhi may be preparing to step in.]

[The ambitions of the far left Communist Party/Marxist, which dominates the ruling 14-party coalition, are the major cause of the present trouble. The party's efforts to use its control of key government agencies, including the police and the Ministry of Lands, to extend its power in the state have made violence a chronic problem. Security is particularly bad in the countryside where the Marxists are attempting to seize land by force to consolidate their position with the landless peasants before the harvest begins on 1 December.]

[These efforts have been intensified recently, probably in part because several high Marxist leaders believe that Prime Minister Gandhi has already made plans to topple the coalition. They fear she has made a deal with a splinter Congress Party within the coalition to form a new non-Marxist government in West Bengal in cooperation with the state's regular Congress group--now in the opposition. A new coalition without the Marxists is unlikely to provide stable government, and more violence would probably ensue.]

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Pakistan: East Pakistani politician Mujibur Rahman may be abandoning his policy of restraint toward the government.

Mujibur Rahman's Awami League, pointing out that near-famine conditions exist in East Pakistan, recently called for a regular supply of low-cost foodgrains and other essential commodities. It further demanded general elections by April 1970, removal of all restrictions on political activity, and a step-up in development projects in East Pakistan.

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Until now, Mujibur Rahman had appeared fully confident that elections would be held. His widespread support by the Bengalis establishes him as a key figure on the political scene, and his restrained attitude toward the government has been central to the reasonably tolerable relations between martial law authorities and the impatient Bengalis. A change in his strategy could threaten the maintenance of calm in East Pakistan.

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Chile: [Military unrest has continued to build since the army uprising last month.]

[Rumors of coup plotting are numerous. The groups allegedly involved appear thus far to have no coordination and no clear plan of action, but look for leadership to retired General Viaux, who led the revolt last month. The government has tried to quiet the unrest by promising military pay raises and other concessions, but is baffled by the persistent military discontent. Some Chileans,]

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[believe that President Frei may actually hope for a coup attempt in the belief that he might profit by it.]

[General Viaux is said to be insisting that he has no political ties and to be warning the malcontents that the time is not ripe for effective action.]

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[Mutual distrust between the military and the government seems to be arousing emotions and resentments that can only lead to trouble.]

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Bolivia: Armed forces commander General Torres has outlined his views on a new role for the Latin American military.

In a speech before a visiting delegation of the Inter-American Defense Board, General Torres called on all Latin American armed forces to focus their energies on the problems of "impoverishment" caused by the differences between the industrialized and underdeveloped countries. He said that if solutions to the social ills on which Communism breeds are not found, "the people will have no other option but the route of violence and uncontrollable revolution."

In what seems to be a justification of the Bolivian military's overthrow of the Siles government and its nationalization of a US oil company, Torres said that democracy in Latin America has been "a mere formula, without force or direction." He contrasted this with the "triumphant advance" of Communism with its "defined road toward a declared goal." In a clear reference to the Bolivian Gulf Oil Company, Torres said that the Alliance for Progress had been emasculated by the "power of trusts and economic monopolies."

Some high-ranking officers are opposed to having the military associated with leftist and highly nationalistic trends in the current government. General Torres' statement that the Bolivian military is in the "vanguard" of the national revolutionary process will further alienate them.

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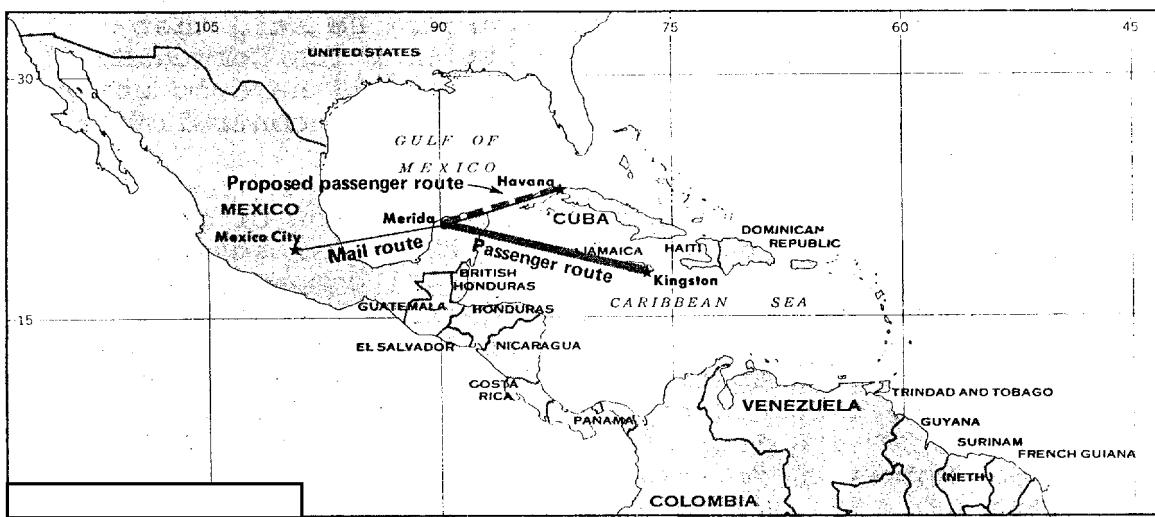
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New Passenger Air Route Between Cuba and Latin America May Soon Be Available



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Cuba-Mexico: A new passenger air route between Cuba and Latin America may soon be available.

Mexicana Airlines, which operates a bimonthly mail flight between Mexico City and Havana via Merida, has requested Mexican authorities to approve its plan to carry passengers on the Havana-Merida leg of the flight. The flight would be timed to coincide with Mexicana flights between Merida and Kingston, Jamaica, which is a convenient transit point. Passengers from Havana would all be booked through to Kingston. The airline expects that government approval of the plan, which has not yet been granted, would pave the way for increased passenger traffic on the currently uneconomical Kingston-Merida leg.

The Cuban Government may view the plan as a possible means of avoiding the close scrutiny that security and immigration officials give all passengers using Cubana Airlines flights between Havana and Mexico City, which is Cuba's only direct air connection with Latin America at present. To bypass the measures in Mexico City, security-conscious air travelers now have to go by way of Madrid, Moscow, or Prague in flying between Cuba and Latin America. It is possible, however, that if the Mexican Government approves the plan, some security measures may be applied in Merida, although they are likely to be less effective than those in Mexico City.

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Surinam: The composition of the new coalition government augurs well for stability.

The two chief components of the new administration are Jagernath Lachmon's East Indian United Hindu Party (VHP) and the Creole- (Negro) dominated Peoples' National Party. Between them, they control 27 of the 39 seats in the unicameral legislature, and the VHP, by taking 19 seats, narrowly missed winning a majority in the elections on 24 October. Both parties espouse generally conservative policies.

Lachmon, who formed the new government, declined to seek either the minister-presidency or any cabinet position. The appointment of a Creole, Jules Sedney, as minister-president is probably designed to assuage fears that after a decade of Negro leadership, the sizable Creole minority might react violently to a non-Creole leader. (The US consul describes Sedney as a "weak leader," and the ministers designate as relatively undistinguished. This suggests that Lachmon will continue to wield significant if not decisive influence from his legislative seat.)

Despite generally bright prospects for a relatively calm four-year term, labor disputes, especially if coupled with racial strife, could eventually lead to serious disturbances. Union leader and extreme leftist Edward Bruma, whose party won a legislative seat for the first time, is a potentially disruptive influence.

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NOTES

Zambia: Soviet heavy equipment will be used for the first time in Zambia to work a small new copper mine financed by two Swiss firms. A Soviet technician has arrived to assemble the equipment and train local crews. The mine is the first to be developed by foreign interests since Zambia nationalized the copper industry this past August. It is expected to have an annual output of 6,000 tons of copper metal and will probably be operating in about 14 months. At that time, the Zambian Government will acquire a 51 percent share in the equity.

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East Germany - Sudan: Pankow has extended nearly \$12 million in credit to the Sudan. It had agreed in early June to expand economic cooperation following diplomatic recognition by the Sudan. Projects to be financed by the credit include a brick factory, a spinning mill, and diesel electric power plants. Repayment in Sudanese commodities, such as cotton and yarn, will begin three years after the shipment of equipment. In addition, the two countries agreed to create a joint economic committee to further their cooperation. [East Germany already has provided at least \$145 million in economic credits to Syria, Iraq, Cambodia, and Southern Yemen in response to recognition.]

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UN-Indonesia: For all practical purposes, the General Assembly is expected this week to end its discussion of West Irian. Although there are misgivings among some UN members, the Assembly will probably pass a resolution acknowledging that the people of West Irian voted last summer to remain a part of Indonesia. African members will probably express concern that the plebiscite was held under conditions of "tight political control" from Djakarta. Nothing is likely to come from the warning of the Dahomeyan representative that his group will closely watch Indonesia's future treatment of the West Irians.

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